

The
Squieres
Tale

As wel by werk as by auctoritee;
for gentil herte kitheth gentillesse.
I se wel, that ye han of my distresse
Compassioun, my faire Canacee,
Of veray wommanly benignytee
That nature in youre principles hath set.
But for noon hope for to fare the bet,
And for to obeye unto youre herte free,
As by the whelp chasted is the leoun,
Right for that cause and that conclusioun,
Whil that I have a leyser and a space,
Myn harm I wol confessen, er I pace.
And evere, whil that oon hir sorwe tolde,
That oother weep, as she to water wolde,
Til that the faucon bad hire to be stille,
And, with a syk, right thus she seyde hir wille.
THER I was bred, alas! that harde day!
And fostred in a roche of marbul gray
So tendrely, that nothyng eyled me,
In yste nat what was adversitee,
Til I koude flee ful hye under the sky.
Tho dwelte a terelet me faste by,
That semed welle of alle gentillesse;
Al were he ful of tresoun and falsnesse,
It was so wrapped under humble cheere,
And under hewe of trouthe in swich manere,
Under plesance, and under bisy peyne,
That I ne koude han wend he koude feyne,
So depe in greyn he dyed his coloures.
Right as a serpent bit hym under floures
Til he may seen his tyme for to byte,
Right so this god of love, this ypocryte.
Dooth so his cerymonyes and obeisaunces,
And kepeth in semblant alle his observaunces
That gowmeth into gentillesse of love.
As in a tounbe is al the faire above,
And under is the corps, swich as ye woot,
Swich was this ypocrite, bothe coold and hoot,
And in this wise he served his entente,
That, save the feend, noon wiste what he mente.
Til that myn herte, to pitous and to nyce,
Al innocent of his crowned malice,
forfered of his deeth, as thoughte me,
Graunted hym love, on this condicioun,
That everemoore myn honour and renoun
Were saved, bothe privee and apert;
This is to seyn, that after his desert,
I yaf hym al myn herte and al my thought,
God woot and he, that otherwise noght,
And took his herte in chaunge for myn for ay.
But sooth is seyde, goon sithen many a day,
A trewe wight and a theef thenken nat oon,
And whan he saugh the thyng so fer ygoon,
That I hadde graunted hym fully my love,
In swich a gyse as I have seyde above,
And yeven hym my trewe herte, as free
As he swoor he his herte yaf to me;
Anon this tigre, ful of doublenesse
fil on his knees with so devout humblesse,

With so heigh reverence, as by his cheere
So lyk a gentil love of manere,
So ravysshed, as it semed, for the joye
That nevere Jason, ne Parys of Troye,
Jason? Certes, ne noon oother man
Syn Lameth was, that alderfirst bigan
To loven two, as writen folk biforn,
Ne nevere, syn the firste man was born,
Ne koude man, by twenty thousand part,
Countrefete the sophymes of his art;
Ne were worthy unbokete his galoche,
Ther doublenesse or feynyng sholde approche
Ne so koude thanke a wight as he dide mel
His manere was an hevener for to see
Til any womman, were she never so wys;
So peynted he and kembde at point/dryys,
As wel his wordes as his contenance;
And I so loved hym for his obeisaunce,
And for the trouthe I demed in his herte,
That, if so were that any thyng hym smerte,
Al were it never so lite, and I it wiste,
Me thoughte, I felte deeth myn herte twiste.
And shortly, so ferforth this thyng is went,
That my wyl was his willes instrument;
This is to seyn, my wyl obeyed his wyl
In alle thyng, as fer as resoun fil,
Kepyng the boundes of my worship evere.
Ne nevere hadde I thyng so lief, ne levere,
As hym, God woot! ne nevere shal namo.
This lasteth longer than a year or two,
That I supposed of hym noght but good.
But finally, thus atte last it stood,
That fortune wolde that he moste twynne
Out of that place which that I was inne.
Wher me was wo, that is no question;
I kan nat make of it discrepcioun,
for o thyng dare I tellen boldely,
I knowe what is the peyne of deeth therby;
Swich harme I felte for he ne myghte bileve.
So on a day of me he took his leve,
So sorwefully eek, that I wende verraily
That he had felt as muche harm as I,
Whan that I herde hym speke, & saugh his hewe;
But natheles, I thoughte he was so trewe,
And eek that he repaire sholde ageyn
Withinne a litel while, sooth to seyn;
And resoun wolde eek that he moste go
for his honour, as ofte it happeth so,
That I made vertu of necessitee,
And took it wel, syn that it moste be.
As I best myghte, I hidde fro hym my sorwe
And took hym by the hond, Seint John to borrowe,
And seyde hym thus: Lo, I am yours al;
Beth swich as I to yow have been, and shal.
What he answerde, it nedeth noght reherce;
Who kan sey bet than he, who kan do werse?
Whan he hath al wel seyde, thanne hath he doon.
Therfore bihoveth him a ful long spoon
That shal ete with a feend, thus herde I seye.
So atte laste he moste forth his weye,
And forth he fleeth, til he cam ther hym leste.
Whan it cam hym to purpos for to reste,
I trowe he hadde thilke text in mynde,

That alle thyng repeyrynge to his kynde
Gladeth hymself, & thus seyn men, as I gesse.
Men loven of propre kynde newefangelnesse,
As briddes doon that men in cages fede;
for though thou nyght and day take of hem hede,
And strawe hir cage faire and softe as silk,
And yere hem sugre, hony, breed and milk,
Yet right anon, as that his dore is uppe,
He with his feet wol spurne adoun his cuppe,
And to the wode he wole, and wormes etc;
So newefangel been they of hire mete
No gentillesse of blood ne may hem bynde.
O ferde this terelet, alas the day!
Though he were gentil born, and fressh
And gay,
And goodlich for to seen, and humble and free,
He saugh upon a tyme a kyte flee,
And sodaynly he loved this kyte so,
That al his love is clene fro me ago,
And hath his trouthe falsed in this wyse;
Thus hath the kyte my love in hire servyse,
And I am lorn withouten remedie.
And with that word this faucon gan to crie,
And gowmeth eft in Canacee's barn.
RECT was the sorwe for the hawkes
harm
That Canacee and alle hir wommen
made;
They nyste how they myghte the
faucon glade;
But Canacee hom bereth hire in hir lappe,
And softly in plastres gan hire wrappe,
Ther as she with hire beek hadde hurt hirselfe.
How kan nat Canacee but herbes delve
Out of the ground, and make salves newe
Of herbes precieuse, and fyne of hewe,
To heelen with this hawk; fro day to nyght
She dooth hire bisynesse and hire fulle myght,
And by hire beddes heed she made a mewe,
And covered it with veluettes blewe
In signe of trouthe that is in wommen sene.
And al withoute, the mewe is peynted grene,
In which were peynted alle thise false fowles,
As beth thise tidyves, terelettes and owles;
Right for despit, were peynted hem bisyde,
And pyes, on hem for to crie and chydre.
Thus lete I Canacee, hir hawk keepyng,
I wol namoore as now speke of hir ryng,
Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
how that this faucon gat hire love ageyn
Repentant, as the storie telleth us,
By mediacioun of Cambalus,
The kynges sone, of which I to yow tolde;
But hennes forth I wol my proces holde
To speke of aventures and of batailles.
FIRST wol I telle yow of Cambynskan,
That in his tyme many a citee wan;
And after wol I speke of Algarsif,

How that he wan Theodora to his wif,
for whom ful ofte in greet peril he was,
Ne hadde he ben holpen by the steede of bra,
And after wol I speke of Cambalo,
That faught in lystes with the bretheren two
for Canacee, er that he myghte hire wynne;
An ther I lefte I wol ageyn bigynne.
Explicit pars secunda. Incipit pars tercia.
Appollo whirleth up his chaar so hye,
Til that the god Mercurius hous the slye...
There is no more of this Tale done by Chauc

Feere folwen the wordes of the Frankelyn to
Squier, & the wordes of the Hoost to the fra
lyn.

IN feith, Squier, thou ha
thee wel yquit,
And gentilly I preise w
thy wit,
Quod the frankeleyn, c
sideringe thy yowthe,
So feelyngly thou spe
sire, I allowe the!
As to my doom, ther is
that is here
Of eloquence that shal be thy peere,
If that thou lyve; God yeve thee good chaunce
And in vertu sende thee continuance;
for of thy speche I have greet deyntee.
I have a sone, and, by the Trinitee!
I hadde levere than twenty pound worth lond
Though it right now were fallen in myn bond
He were a man of swich discrecioun
As that ye been! fy on possessioun,
But if a man be vertuous withal.
I have my sone snybbed, and yet shal,
for he to vertu listeth nat entende;
But for to pleye at dees, and to despende,
And lese al that he hath, is his usage.
And he hath levere talen with a page
Than to comune with any gentil wight
There he myghte lerne gentillesse aright.
STRAW for youre gentillesse, quod our
Hoost;
What, frankeleyn? pardee, sire, wel tho
woost
That ech of yow moot tellen atte leste
A tale or two, or breken his biheste.
That knowe I wel, sire, quod the frankeleyn
I prey yow, haveth me nat in desdeyn
Though to this man I speke a word or two.
Celle on thy tale, withouten wordes mo.
Gladly, sire Hoost, quod he, I wole obeye
Unto your wyl; now herkneth what I seye.
I wol yow nat contrarien in no wyse
As fer as that my wittes wol suffyse;
I prey to God that it may plesen yow,
Thanne woot I wel that it is good ynow.
Explicit.